

Lawmakers Question Amtrak's Motives and Legal Basis for Appointing Temporary IG

WASHINGTON. D.C. – House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Edolphus Towns (D-NY) and Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) today in a letter to Amtrak Chairman Thomas C. Carper called for the immediate replacement of Amtrak "Interim" Inspector General Lorraine Green – a 12-year member of Amtrak management who intends to return to her former position when a new IG is appointed.

"We believe that the selection of a senior member of Amtrak management as Interim Inspector General undermines the statutory independence of the Office of Inspector General," wrote the two oversight leaders. "Ms. Green's actions during the time she has been serving as Interim Inspector General raise questions about her actual independence."

The letter follows the June 18, 2009, forced retirement of former Amtrak Inspector General Fred E. Weiderhold, Jr. who had aggressively investigated and questioned the Amtrak General Counsel's office for spending tens of millions of dollars on outside law firms. A bipartisan investigation by the committee has revealed longstanding and serious conflicts between Amtrak management and the Inspector General and major disputes about the role of the Inspector General within Amtrak.

"The independence of Amtrak's Inspector General is critical to effectively weed out waste and fraud, especially now with increased stimulus spending at Amtrak," said Chairman Towns. "By installing one of their own as Inspector General, it looks like Amtrak management is trying to take the teeth out of the watchdog."

"Amtrak has flagrantly disregarded the rules and expectations set forth by Congress to protect the independence of Inspectors General," said Rep. Issa. "The brazen appointment of an 'Interim' IG confirms the existence of a problem within management that must be investigated."

Chairman Towns and Ranking Member Issa note the interim Inspector General has quickly taken actions that may erode the institutional independence of the Amtrak IG office in demanding a response by July 31.

[Click here to read a copy of the letter from Chairman Towns and Ranking Member Issa](#)